

Q4 2019/20 High-Scoring Service Risks

Risk ref	Service	Risk	Risk Owner	Impact	Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
CSDR006	Children's Services (Directorate)	Failure to manage within budget impacts the financial position of the Service and its ability to provide services	Gail Hopper	4	4	16

- **Explain the main reasons for the high risk score?** Locally, predicted pressures are being experienced as a result of an increase in demand for children's social care services generally. Since April 2019 there has been a slight bucking of the regional trend as figures start to stabilise; however key indicators of the volume of work with very vulnerable children and their families remain high. There has been a small but significant reduction in the number of children subject to a child protection plan, care proceedings being initiated and the number of children cared for (has reduced by over thirty by the end of Quarter 3). However, numbers remain high compared with statistical neighbours. There continues to be a continuing increase in demand for children with special educational needs and / or disabilities and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. This reflects the picture both regionally and nationally.
- **What have been the significant controls implemented to mitigate this risk?** A Business Case for increased resources in line with areas of increased demand in children's social care has been agreed; this has been worked upon with Finance colleagues and has been considered at informal Cabinet, the ICB and has now been presented to Cabinet for a formal decision. A five year sustainability strategy has also been developed, with key components to increase placement sufficiency through innovation and market management. The strategy for 20/21 has been fully funded and therefore not expecting an overspend in the next financial year, however, this was the assumption prior to Covid-19 and the impact of this pandemic is not yet fully understood.
- **Are any reductions in the risk score anticipated in the future?** The Senior Leadership Team regularly considers budget pressures collectively and in their separate management meetings. There are monthly meetings with the Chief Executive, the S151 Officer and Director of Resources, as well as regular meetings with the Leader and Portfolio Holder. Following review of the Residual risk score at the end of Q4 it was decided that in the context of Covid-19 it would not be prudent to reduce the risk score at this time.

Risk ref	Service	Risk	Risk Owner	Impact	Likelihood	Residual Risk Score
CSCR002	Children's Services	Demand for a Children's Social Care Service continues to increase, leading to failure to manage within budget	Julia Hassall	4	4	16

- **Explain the main reasons for the high risk score?** The growing child population in borough and growing demand is causing increased budget pressures in children's social care and in the additional needs service (SEND).
- **What have been the significant controls implemented to mitigate this risk?** A five year sustainability strategy has been developed by reviewing and mapping levels of need and implications; reviewing the research and evidence base of what works; reviewing all children in external placements and working up a detailed investment strategy. This involves a Greater Manchester approach to implementing innovation programmes that have been successful elsewhere in the country. Progress is being made in Rochdale to develop these approaches, but will take time to deliver impact. However, as we have been implementing the No Wrong Door cultural changes during 2019/20 there has been a reduction in external placements – 6 residential; 14 independent fostering and 4 semi-independent living placements – the full year effect of these reductions would be circa £2m but Covid-19 is likely to impact on these projections. One of the areas we cannot control is the inward migration; see below. The Family Service Model (FSM) and approach has been developed to manage demand through co-ordinated multi-agency early help. The FSM has been developed as part of the transformation programme and predicted deflections and mainstreaming have not been realised to date. Additional resource has been allocated in line with demand in Children's Social Care.
- **Are any reductions in the risk score anticipated in the future?** The sustainability strategy will over time support greater likelihood of managing demand within the designated budget. What the service is unable to predict is those demands emerging from children new to the authority. What is not known about these children is what level of social care needs they may present moving forward. The risk score cannot be reduced at this time until we have a better understanding of the impact of Covid-19.